

APPENDIX A - Amendments to the Claims of S.N. 09/549,002

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 8, 9, and 12, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof, and amend claims 1-7, 10, and 11, as follows:

1. (Amended) A [resilient, replaceable collar] system for protecting a roadway structure from damage caused by vehicular traffic and vice versa, the roadway structure extending above a roadway pavement, the [collar] system comprising:

a resilient, replaceable collar having a body [having] with upper and lower surfaces, an opening provided therethrough and sized to accommodate the outer periphery of the roadway structure, and sloped side walls extending downward from the upper surface of the body towards the lower surface of the body, wherein the upper surface of the body is in substantially planar alignment with an upper surface of the roadway structure; and

at least one resilient riser provided between the lower surface of the collar body and the roadway pavement, the resilient riser having a thickness so that the collar body and resilient riser together have a height substantially equal to the distance the roadway structure extends above the roadway pavement.

2. (Amended) The [resilient, replaceable collar] system as recited in claim 1, wherein the resilient, replaceable collar [structure] comprises a material selected from the group consisting of rubber scrap from tires, synthetic rubber, natural rubber, and plastic.

3. (Amended) The [resilient, replaceable collar] system as recited in claim 1, wherein the roadway structure comprises one of a manhole, a catch basin, or a utility access conduit.

4. (Amended) The [resilient, replaceable collar] system as recited in claim 1, wherein the roadway pavement comprises one of asphalt, gravel or concrete.

5. (Amended) The [resilient, replaceable collar] system as recited in claim 4, wherein a portion of the roadway pavement is stripped away so that the roadway structure extends above the roadway pavement.

6. (Amended) The [resilient, replaceable collar] system as recited in claim 1, wherein the resilient, replaceable collar is circular with a central circular opening to snugly engage a cylindrical element of the roadway structure.

7. (Amended) The [resilient, replaceable collar] system as recited claim 1, wherein the resilient, replaceable collar [structure] is one of square, rectangular, hexagonal, or octagonal with one of a circular, square or rectangular central opening to snugly engage one of a circular, square or rectangular element, respectively, of the roadway structure.

10. (Amended) The [resilient, replaceable collar] system as recited in claim [9] 1, wherein the resilient riser comprises a material selected from the group consisting of rubber scrap from tires, synthetic rubber, natural rubber, and plastic.

11. (Amended) The [resilient, replaceable collar] system as recited claim 1, wherein the upper surface of the body is substantially planar.